


VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS



Jesus Christ

Paraphrased from Timothy Ware's
The Orthodox Church

*Christ is our victorious king, not in
spite of the crucifixion, but because*

The incarnation is an act of God's philanthropia, of His loving kindness towards mankind. Many eastern writers, looking at the Incarnation from this point of view, have argued that even if man had never fallen, God in His love for humanity would still have become man: the Incarnation must be seen as part of the eternal purpose of God, and not simply as an answer to the fall.

But because man fell, the Incarnation is not only an act of love but an act of salvation. Jesus Christ, by uniting man and God in His own person, reopened for man the path to union with God. In his own person Christ showed what the true 'likeness of God' is, and through His redeeming and victorious sacrifice He set that likeness once again within man's reach. Christ, the Second Adam, came to earth and reversed the effects of the first Adam's disobedience.

The essential element in the Orthodox doctrine of Christ is this: true God and true man, one person in two natures, without separation and without confusion: a single person, but endowed with two wills and two energies.

True God and true man; as Bishop Theophan the Recluse put it: 'Behind the veil of Christ's flesh, Christians behold the Divine God.'

These words bring us face to face with what is perhaps the most striking feature in the Orthodox approach to the Incarnate Christ: an overwhelming sense of His divine glory. However, Orthodoxy does not overlook Christ's humanity.

The Orthodox Church on Good Friday thinks not simply of Christ's human pain and suffering by itself, but rather of the contrast between His outward humiliation and His inward glory. Orthodox see not just the suffering humanity of Christ, but a suffering God:

Today is hung upon the tree
He who hung the earth in the
midst of the waters.
A crown of thorns crowns him
Who is the king of the angels.
He is wrapped about with the
purple of mockery
Who wraps the heaven in
clouds.'

Behind the veil of Christ's bleeding and broken flesh, Orthodox still discern the Divine God. Even Golgotha is a theophany; even on Good Friday the Church sounds a note of Resurrection joy:

'We worship thy passion, O
Christ:
Show us also thy glorious
Resurrection!'
'I magnify thy sufferings,
I praise thy burial and thy
Resurrection,
Shouting, Lord, Glory to thee!'

The Crucifixion is not separated from the Resurrection, for both are but a single action. Calvary is seen always in the light of the empty tomb; the Cross is an emblem of victory. When Orthodox think of Christ Crucified, they think not only of His suffering and desolation; they think of Him as Christ the Victor, Christ the King, reigning in triumph from the Tree.

Deacon Dimitri's Ordination into the Priesthood.

Deacon Dimitri will be ordained into the Priesthood on Saturday July 23rd, 1994 at Saint George Church.

The events taking place are as follows:

- 8am-11am** Ordination Service
- 12pm** Luncheon held in honour of Father Dimitri Tsakas at the Greek Club.
- 6:30-7:30pm** Divine Liturgy in English
- 7:30pm** Barbecue at the Welfare centre.

The Barbecue will be held after the English Liturgy on Saturday 23rd July. The cost is \$8 for adults and \$5 for children under 12 years.

COFFEE ROSTER

The coffee offered after liturgy on Saturday nights is appreciated by all who attend and take the opportunity to participate in fellowship. But who helps put it all together and keeps it running every week?

If you would like to help by volunteering for the coffee roster, please contact Nikki Cassimatis.

ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN STUDENT FELLOWSHIP

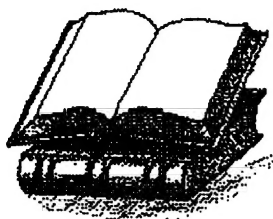
Metings are held at Queensland University St Lucia Campus each week on Tuesday at lunch, 1pm to 2pm, in Rm 226 Health Service (Gordon Greenwood). Usually a discussion or presentation is conducted concerning the Orthodox Church.

All are welcome.

The Choir Is Expanding

The English Liturgy Choir is expanding in order to cope with the ever-increasing demand for English Liturgies, weddings, baptisms and other services. We would like to increase the size of the choir to the point where we can have a functional choir at every service without requiring the same people to sing at every service.

There is no audition (most of the choir has no previous musical experience), and it is a lot of fun as well as rewarding. If you are interested / curious / breathing, call Nick Inglis (349 ~~7450~~ ⁴³⁴⁰) or Patra Ganis (398 5398).



BOOK REVIEWS

At Last!!! Our order of new books has arrived from America. We now have the best supply of orthodox books for sale in Brisbane (and perhaps Australia). The bookshop is open on Saturday nights after the Liturgy at St George. Our bookstore is open every Saturday after the English Liturgy. Many books are available, only some of which are discussed below.

THE ORTHODOX WAY

- by Bishop Kallistos (Ware)

This small book contains a classic account of the belief, worship and life of the Orthodox Church which raises the basic issues of Theology: God as hidden yet revealed, the problem of evil, the nature of salvation, the meaning of faith, prayer, death and what lies beyond. One non-Orthodox reviewer wrote of this special book - "I have never, in reviewing a book, felt such a powerful desire to have the wealth to present each reader with a copy."
Price \$10.50

THE FEAT OF FAITH

- by Archbishop Paul of the Orthodox Church of Finland.

Using simple accessible language, the author guides the faithful towards a deeper understanding of the rites and prayers of the liturgy, the centre of the Church's life, and thus towards a more fruitful participation in the banquet of the Kingdom. One reviewer of this book stated that it "... should be in the hands of every Orthodox Christian and anyone else who desires a straightforward and spirited commentary on the main

service of Orthodox worship."

Price: \$9.50

THE YEAR OF GRACE OF THE LORD

- by a Monk of the Eastern Church

A Scriptural and liturgical commentary on the calendar of the Orthodox Church, this book is a guide to the scriptural readings and prayers, and to the spiritual growth in Christ that is open to us. The liturgical year is "an abridgement of the history of salvation."

Price: \$14.50

BOOK OF PRAYERS

- A selection for Orthodox Christians

The result of three years' work by a committee of clergy and scholars at St Andrews Greek Orthodox Theological College, Sydney, and produced with the blessing of His Eminence, Archbishop Stylianos, this book will fill the long felt need for a selection of prayers in English for everyday use.

Price: \$12.00

How to Prepare for Holy Communion

WHAT IS RECOMMENDED FOR THE PREPARATION

(a) Cleansing the Soul by Confession

Firstly, you must cleanse your soul of sin. Sit quietly and look within. Examine your deeds, your thoughts, your feelings, your attitude and when you recognise your sins go to your confessor with sincerity. Confession will cleanse your soul and remove all guilt. It will make you worthy to receive the Lord.

(b) Devout Thoughts of the Sacrament

Prior to receiving Holy Communion, it's useful to have devout thoughts of the Sacrament and of the love of God which is manifested through it. It is helpful to read literature about Holy Communion and to study John 6:22-59, where Jesus talks about the "Bread of Life".

(c) Additional Prayer

Prepare with additional prayer. The service of Holy Communion has beautiful prayers which help you to communicate with the Lord. Open your heart and soul to Jesus. He will prepare you to receive His Immaculate Body and Soul.

(d) Fasting

Fasting prior to receiving Holy Communion is an exercise in abstinence. Your spiritual father can guide you in this, taking into consideration your state of health.

(e) Cleanliness

Not only cleanliness of the soul is required before proceeding for Holy Communion but also cleanliness of the body, otherwise it is disrespectful. It doesn't matter if your clothes are old or you're poorly dressed - what's important is that they are clean.

"WITH THE FEAR OF GOD, WITH FAITH AND WITH LOVE, DRAW NEAR"

Towards the end of the Liturgy you will hear the Priest calling you to come forth for Holy Communion. Observe the Priest's words.

"With the Fear of God..." In other words, with reverence, repentance and perception of your insignificance before the Greatness of God. You, a mere person, weak, sinful. He, your Great Creator, the Almighty. Yet He accepts to be received by you. Think about this carefully and with reverence and humility, draw near.

"...with Faith..." With faith toward the Sacrament. You see bread and wine, but it's no longer simply bread and wine. It has transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ. Incomprehensible to the human mind, but true. We receive within us the Body and Blood of Christ. With faith in this, draw near.

"...and with Love..." If you have hatred in your heart, do not proceed. If you have harmed someone, go and ask his forgiveness and then draw near. Proceed towards the Sacrament with love in your heart - love toward God, love toward Christ your Saviour, who sacrificed himself to save you, and love toward your fellow-men. They are your brothers and sisters since you are all children of the same Heavenly Father.

With pure and sincere love, draw near. The Lord is waiting for you.

ENGLISH LITURGY BBQ



When?

Saturday 23 July
1994 after
English Liturgy

Cost:

\$8 for adults
\$5 for children.

Where?

At the Welfare
Centre





SAINT CONSTANTINE AND SAINT HELEN

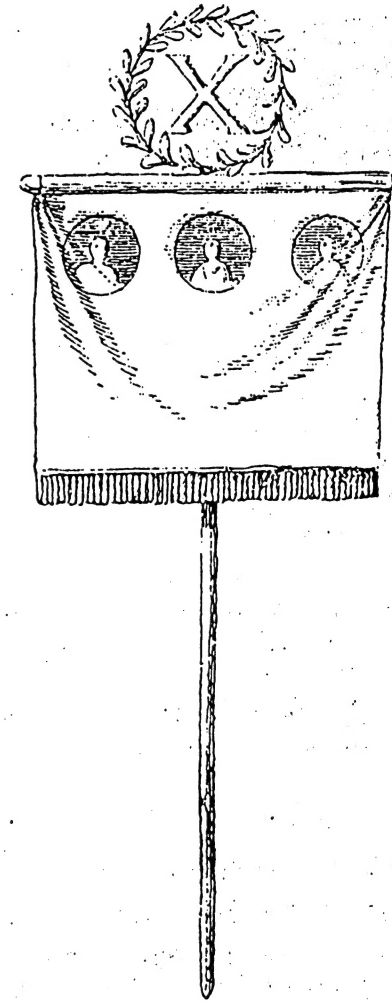
SAINT CONSTANTINE AND SAINT HELEN

(Their memory is celebrated 21 May)

Saint Constantine was born at 274 AD in an area which is known today as Central Serbia. His mother was Saint Helen and was of Greek origin. She passed on to him the belief in Christ and to be compassionate towards the Christians, his religion and the church.

During the period that Constantine was born the Roman Empire was in chaos. The Emperors were constantly being murdered for the throne. In 284 AD, Dioklitianos became Emperor and he divided the Roman Empire in two parts - the Eastern, where he settled and the Western which he gave to his friend Maximianos Arkoulis to govern. However, the Empire was vast, therefore, he appointed two helpers who were co-rulers and their successors. In the East was Galarios and in the West, which consisted of France (as we know it today), Britain and Spain, was Constantine's father. To obtain the position, though, he was forced to divorce his wife, Helen, and marry Maximianos' daughter. This was a kind of guarantee that he would not turn around and fight him one day. However, it was by mutual agreement with his wife, because firstly, as soon as he became Caesar life would be easier for the Christians in his realm, secondly, as successor he would one day become Emperor which was significant to the Christians and thirdly, they had hopes for their son Constantine.

The years passed and Constantine's father became ill. During the last days of his life he gave up the throne to his son, who was 32 years of age. The army regarded Constantine a worthy successor and proclaimed him Emperor of the Western world, but he was not officially recognised as such by the other rulers. He ruled



The Banner. Christian flag with the characteristic monogram of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Constantine's attitude towards Christianity, which had beneficial results for the church. She had instilled in him compassion for the Christians. And secondly, she herself was a Saint. She lived a holy life, without being influenced by glory. By her example and deeds she attracted many people to Christianity. With her son's support she built magnificent churches in which even to this day the faithful worship God.



Saint Constantine at the First Ecumenical Synod

successfully and charitably, always protecting the Christians. The hostile attempts by Galarious, the persecutor of the Christians, to remove Constantine from power failed. He eventually died of a tormenting disease.

However, political unrest continued as Maxentios, son of Maximianos, planned ways to annihilate the other rulers so he could become the one and only ruler of the entire Empire. As Constantine pondered how he was going to confront him with his lesser army, a miracle happened. He saw in the sky the sign of the cross. Up until then, he sympathised with the Christians but he was still a pagan. Shaken now by the vision, he prayed passionately. Believing wholeheartedly that he would be victorious with his faith in God and the sign of the cross, he made a banner of the cross and set out with his army to confront Maxentios. Constantine was victorious and officially was proclaimed Emperor of the Western world.

This was how the first Christian flag was created, and Constantine had the great honour to be the first Christian king and royal defender of Christianity. He ordered the cross to be erected in the main areas of Rome and searched for the remains of martyrs, who had died for believing in Christ, and buried them with honour.

Constantine's victory against Maxentios was a victory for Christianity against paganism. For 300 years martyrs had shed their blood. To worship Christ they had dug tunnels under the ground and hid in catacombs. However, now they were rejoicing.

The first achievement after his victory was when his sister married Likinios, the king of the Eastern world, who promised that he wouldn't persecute the Christians. A decree was formed which recognised the church as an independent body and gave complete freedom to

Christians to worship Christ and perform religious ceremonies.

For nine years peace was maintained, until Likinios broke his promise and started a battle against Constantine and the Christians. However, Constantine proved victorious against Likinios and at the age of 49 was declared Emperor of the entire Empire - Eastern and Western, which now became one.

Inspired by the lesson in the Gospel, Constantine wanted to spread peace in all his kingdom, however, this proved ironical. There was a heated dispute between Arios and the Bishop of Alexandria over the delicate issue of the "nature and essence of Christ". Arios had many followers, some of whom were bishops and clergymen, and the heresy didn't take long to spread throughout the Empire. The matter became serious so Constantine intervened to pacify the church. Therefore, the first Ecumenical Synod took place with 318 Fathers taking part. Arios put forth his ideas but the Fathers opposed him. Finally, many of Arios' followers returned to the true faith while he maintained his belief.

The Synod was responsible for composing the first part of "The Creed" and establishing when the Holy Pasha should be celebrated.

Constantine, wanting to relocate the capital of the Roman Empire, which was then Rome, build the city of Constantinople. It was named in his honour and dedicated to the Mother of God, Theotokos.

Constantine died in 337 AD, the day of Pentacost, at the age of 63. He ruled for over 30 years. History called him Great. Our church named him Saint. The abolishment of persecutions and the replacement of paganism with

Christianity is a high contribution to the church.

Saint Helen suffered many trials in her lifetime but she faced them with her faith in Christ. Even though her son had been Emperor and she the First Lady, she was humble and kindhearted.

Wanting to find the Holy Cross she travelled to the Holy Land. Once there she made inquiries about the location where Christ was crucified. Through the help of a Jewish woman, Saint Helen found the area where the cross was buried. After the excavation, three crosses were found. On one was the inscription Pontios Pilot had attached to Christ's cross. It is also said that Saint Helen found the nails they used to crucify Him. Overcome with emotion, Saint Helen commenced the construction of several churches in the Holy Land. When she decided to return to Constantinople, she had the Holy Cross sliced down the centre, thus forming two crosses - one she left in Jerusalem and the other she took back to Constantinople. She also took with her the four nails.

On her return to Constantinople, St Helen stopped in Cyprus where she made a large wooden cross, attaching to it a small piece of the Holy Cross she had with her. At that spot on the mountain a monastery was built called Stavrobounion Monastery. It is said that that particular cross stood suspended in mid-air without any support. (An English traveller wrote in his diary that he had seen the "suspended cross" in 1700 AD). However, the monastery was burnt and with it the "suspended cross" except for the piece which was from the Holy Cross. Today, the largest piece of the Holy Cross is found at one of the monasteries on Mt Athos in Northern Greece.

Saint Helen died at the age of 80. The church named her Apostle. Firstly, because she was responsible for